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EGYPT: [Anwar Sadat's nomination to replace Nasir appears to solve the immediate succession problem, but further leadership changes are likely.]

[Sadat's selection by the executive committee and the central committee of the Arab Socialist Union, Egypt's only legal political organization, virtually assures him of the presidency. Egypt's legislative body, the National Assembly, has been called into session to confirm the nomination and to present his name for a referendum tentatively scheduled for 15 October. These procedures are mere formalities, however, for government control of the election process has in the past been complete.]

[As a member of Nasir's original revolutionary group, and because Nasir named him vice president in December 1969, Sadat brings an aura of legitimacy to his new position.]

[Sadat is apparently an extreme nationalist; in the past he has severely castigated both the UK and the US for their actions in the Middle East. Because of his criticism of Egypt's acceptance of the US peace initiative this summer, he reportedly fell into Nasir's disfavor for several weeks.]

[Sadat lacks Nasir's charisma and authority, and his nomination as president probably rests upon the support of other influential Egyptian political figures such as Minister of Interior Sharawi Jumah, Minister of State Sami Sharaf, and Foreign Minister Mahmud Riad.]

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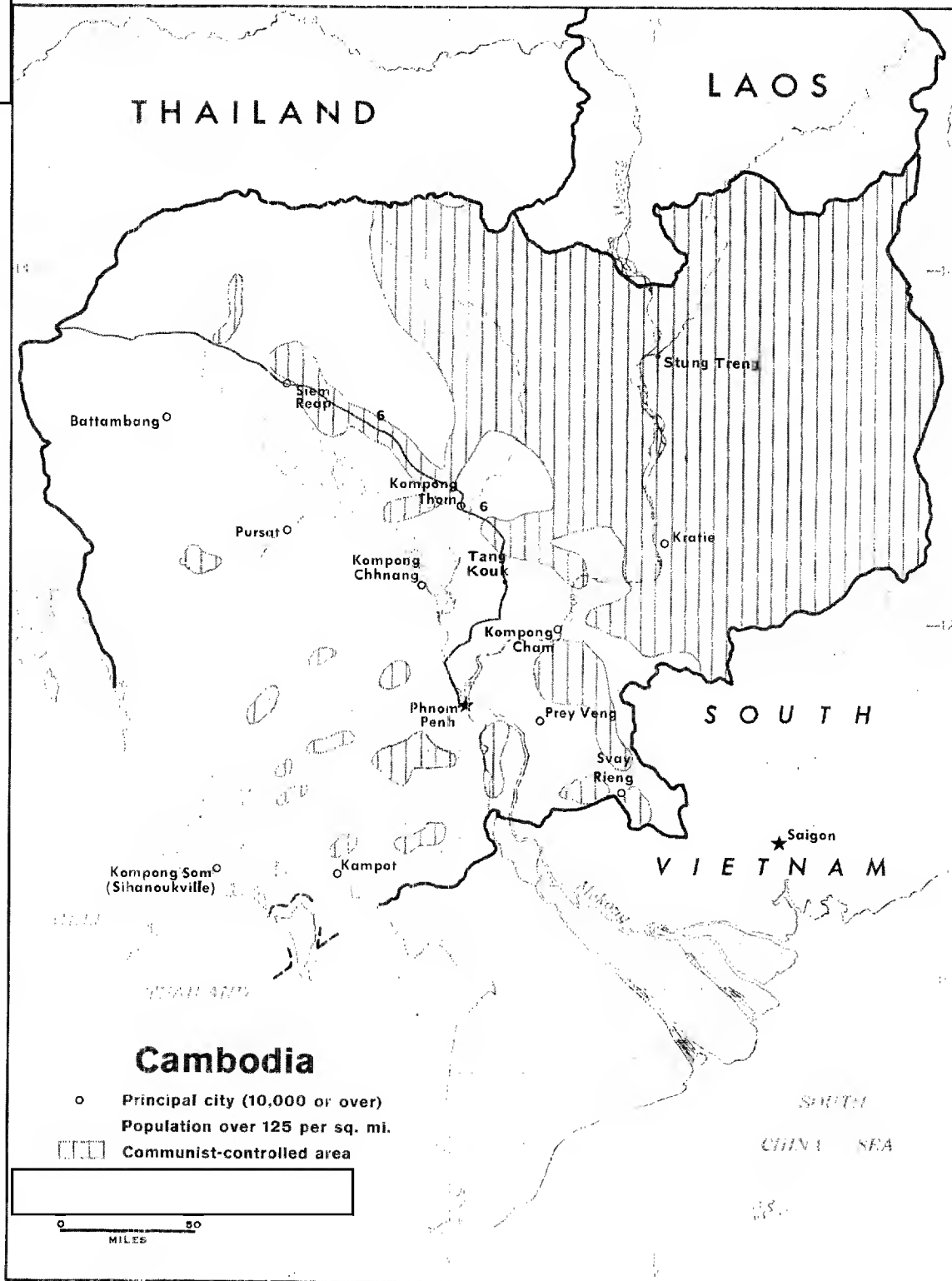
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Current Situation



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25X1 CAMBODIA: [Harassing attacks against the government column on Route 6 continue, but no major action has developed.]

25X1 [] the Communists in the vicinity of the bivouacked task force are receiving new arms and ammunition as well as fresh troops.]

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25X1 The Vietnamese Communists may be sending some ethnic Cambodians from North Vietnam for use in Cambodia. [] 200 such Cambodians, who claim they were recruited in South Vietnam and trained in the north, passed through Stung Treng town recently. Some of them helped train local Cambodians in propaganda techniques and small arms familiarization before heading farther south. The Communists are reportedly having difficulty recruiting training and administrative cadre; these Cambodians may be destined for such tasks. It seems unlikely that many ethnic Cambodians from South Vietnam have been sent to the north, given the proximity of training bases in Cambodia.

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FRANCE-USSR: President Pompidou's aim during his trip to the Soviet Union this week will be to revive the flagging relationship between the two countries.

No major breakthroughs are anticipated, but the French leader probably will press for specific bilateral moves--primarily political--to demonstrate that the "special relationship" established by De Gaulle has not deteriorated markedly.



The Soviets are aware of France's unhappiness at being at least temporarily supplanted by Bonn as Moscow's most important negotiating partner in Western Europe. They are concerned that French resentment over this development will lead to a cooling of French-Soviet relations and, conversely, to an improvement in Franco-American cooperation.

In an effort to counter this trend, Moscow has already sounded out the French on the possibility of regularizing high-level political consultations and may produce a formal proposal to this effect during Pompidou's visit. Paris probably would respond favorably to such a move. Other specific bilateral steps which the two countries might agree on would be to move forward on the opening of a French Consulate General in Leningrad and a Soviet Consulate General in Marseilles and to study the possibility of increased French investment in certain Soviet projects.

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Europe probably will lead the list of foreign policy topics Pompidou will want to discuss. The French leader doubtless will reiterate that progress on such issues as a European security conference and on East-West detente is tied to progress on Berlin. Events in the Middle East and Asia also will be key topics for discussion, with the French emphasizing the congruity of views between Paris and Moscow on those areas.



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GABON: [Renewed charges of US subversion probably stem from mounting internal pressure on President Bongo.]

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[Bongo has [] accused US officials of meeting clandestinely with young Fangs, members of the largest tribe, and with trying to weaken Gabon's ties with France. An officially inspired TV editorial virtually suggested that the US Embassy be closed.]

[US relations with Gabon have fluctuated sharply since a former US ambassador was charged with complicity in an abortive 1964 coup. At the root of the difficulty is Washington's failure to contribute massively to Gabon's development needs. Bongo equates friendship with aid and tends to see any other US activities as attempts to undermine his regime. This view is reinforced by local Frenchmen who wish to protect France's predominant influence and economic position. The President is now deeply at odds with French commercial interests over the failure of price controls.]

[On the eve of Bongo's departure for a visit to the UN, local Frenchmen are probably especially anxious to exploit his fears in order to forestall further cooperation with US businesses. Bongo, a minority tribesman, is also jittery over what the Fangs' reaction will be to the harsh jail term just meted out on dubious grounds to their top-ranking cabinet minister.]

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VENEZUELA: The government is seeking higher revenues from oil companies in an apparent shift in emphasis from traditional demands for an increased share of the US market. Venezuelan authorities assert that export revenues do not reflect world market conditions, and the government claims that it is not benefiting as it should. According to the companies, little can be done to accommodate these demands because some 70 percent of export sales are made under contract at fixed prices.

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